Database Service and relaunch Express Parcel Post and Indian Postal Order to generate more revenue. The raising of additional resources through commercial publicity on postal stationery and postal buildings is also being envisaged.

(c) The Conference of Chief Postmasters General was convened in Delhi on 04.09.98. It held wide ranging and meaningful discussions on the report of Justice Talwar Committee on ED agents. National Postal Policy, Citizens' Charter, Generation of Resources and Augmentation of Preventive Vigilance Machinery. These discussions provided useful inputs for improving the quality of various postal services.

(d) Justice Talwar Committee recommendations arc under active consideration of the Government.

(e) The details of major achievements during the 8th Plan period is at Annex 'A'. The 8th Plan achievements of Maharashtra Circle is at Annex 'B' Major programmes proposed during the current year and 9th Plan are at Annex "C and "D' respectively. At Annex 'E' are the 9th Plan and Annual Plan programmes proposed for Maharashtra Circle, *[see* Appendix 185, Annexure 14]

National Postal Policy

534. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the formulation of a National Postal Policy undertaken in 1992 has since been completed;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons for the delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) to (c) In 1992, action was initiated to draft a National Postal Policy but the matter did not progress further thereafter. During 1997, a draft National Postal Policy was prepared and submitted for consideration of the Consultative Committee of Parliament for the Ministry of Communications in its meeting held on 20.8.97. However, discussions remained inconclusive as in the meanwhile the Lok Sabha was dissolved. Keeping in view the rapid socio-economic development and all pervasive technological advances in the communication sector and increasing pressure for faster and more efficient service and to offer value added services especially tailor made for identified customer segments, the draft National Postal Policy has been further modified and is at present under active consideration.

Harassment of Small Investors in Post Offices

535. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to an article that appeared in India Today on page 71 dated 9th November, 1998 under the caption "Safe deposits, despite red tape, saving in post office schemes is the best bet for small investors";

(b) what is the amount in such deposits as on 30th November, 1998;

(c) whether Government are aware that investors many of them poor and illiterate persons in villages, and small towns face harassment due to clumsy and out-dated procedures for withdrawing money; and

(d) if so, whether Government propose to streamline procedures so that depositors are saved from harassment at Post offices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The amount of total, money in all such deposits (small savings schemes and savings certificates put together) as on 30th September, 1998 is Rs. 13,81,62.17 crores only.

Due to last network of Post Offices in remote areas of the country the figure as on 30th September, 1998 is available only.

(c) The procedures for withdrawing money from Post Office Savings Bank is very simple and customer friendly. The procedures followed for withdrawing money are not dated and are in tune with the procedures followed by other financial instructions and the need of the users.

(d) The streamling of procedures is an ongoing process. As and when difficulty is faced by the customer or any lacuna and weakness noticed in the procedures the same are taken care of by the Department and MOF from time to time. DOP undertakes SB operation work on behalf of MOF on agency basis.

बिहार में डाकघर

536. **श्रीमती सरोज दुबे** : क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार बिहार के ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में डाकघरों की नई शाखाएं खोलने का विचार रखती है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है;

(ग) क्या इस सबंध में कोई लक्ष्य निर्धारित किया गया है;

(घ) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है, और

(ड) सरकार द्वारा ग्रामीण लोगों को डाक सूविधांए प्रदन करने के लिए क्या कदम उठाए गए हैं?

संचार मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री कबीन्द्र पुरकायस्थ) : (क) से (घ) जी हां वार्षिक योजना 1998-99 में बिहार के ग्रामीण क्षेत्र में 60 अतिरिक्त विभागीय शाखा डाकघर खोलने का प्रस्ताव है बशर्ते कि संसाधन उपलब्ध है।

(ड़) बिहार राज्य के ग्रामीण क्षेत्र में निम्नलिखित डाकघर पहले ही कार्य कर रहे हैं;

प्रधान डाकघर	01
विभागीय उप डाकघर	819
अतिरिक्त विभागीय उप डाकघर	101
अतिरिक्त विभागीय शाखा डाकघर	10176

दूरसंचार निगम परिषद

537. **श्री मती सरोज दुबे** : क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार नई दिल्ली नगर पालिका परिषद की तर्ज पर दूरसंचार निगम परिषद गठित करने का विचार रखती हैं;

(ख) यदि हां, तो क्या इससे दूरसंचार सेवाओ में कोई गुणात्मक सुधार होगा, और

(ग) यदि हां, तो इस सबंधं में सरकार की क्या प्रतिक्रिया हैं?

संचार मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री कबीन्द्र पुरकायस्थ) : (क) जी नहीं।

(ख) और (ग) उपर्युक्त भाग (क) के उत्तर को देखते हुए प्रश्न नहीं उठता।

Restructuring of DOT

538. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item published in the Hindustan Times dated the 31st August, 1998 under the caption "Telecom Unions against Corporation of DOT";

(b) if so, the reaction of Government to the observations made therein and facts of the matter;

(c) the details of steps taken/proposed to be taken in this regard; and

(d) what is the present status of reforms proposed in restructuring of DOT and other corporates under Department of Telecommunication?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) A statement of facts is annexed (See below).